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ABSTRACT

Participants at the fourth conference of Ministers of Education of Member States of the Europe region (MINEDEUROPE IV) received this document prior to the conference. It was designed to provide the participants with information and matters for reflection that might serve as a starting point for their deliberations and help them to formulate conclusions and recommendations. The document was not meant to provide a comprehensive examination of developments in the European region; it merely set out to draw attention to certain trends connected with the items of the provisional agenda. There are four sections to the document: (1) some trends in the development of education in Europe since the third conference of Ministers; (2) the humanistic, cultural, and international dimensions of education; (3) the impact of the new information technologies on education systems; and (4) priorities and modalities for regional and international co-operation in the field of education. (DB)

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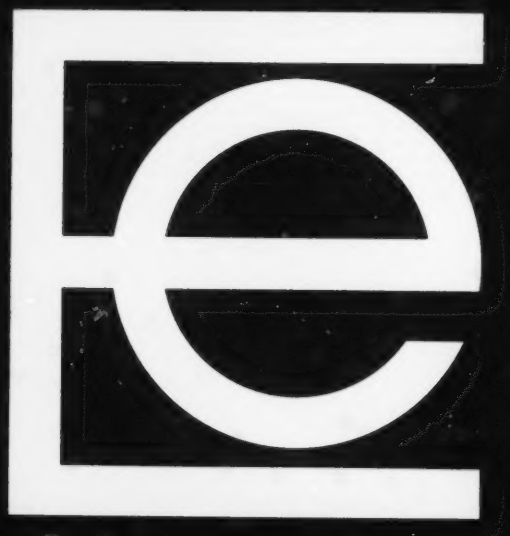

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FOURTH CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF EDUCATION
OF MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPE REGION

Paris, 21-27 September 1988

THE PROSPECTS AND TASKS OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN EUROPE AT THE DAWN OF A NEW MILLENNIUM

ED-88/CONF.205/COL.8

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ACRONYMS

CEPES	European Centre for Higher Education (Bucharest)
CMEA	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
CODIESEE	Programme of Co-operation in research and Development of Educational Innovation in South and South-East Europe
CSCE	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
EC	European Communities
ECE	United Nations Economnic Commission for Europe
ECLE	European Centre for Leisure and Education
ERASMUS	European Community Action Scheme for the mobility of University Students
IAU	International Association of Universities
IBE	International Bureau of Education (Geneva)
ICE	International Conference on Education
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
ILO	International Labour Organisation (Geneva)
INISTE	International Network for Information on Science and Technology Education
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NIT	New Information Technologies
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SC/BSE	Unesco's Bureau for Scientific Co-operation in Europe
UIE	Unesco Institute of Education (Hamburg)

INTRODUCTION

1. The purpose of this document is to provide participants at the fourth Conference of Ministers of Education of Member States of the Europe region (MINEDEUROPE IV), with information and matter for reflection which might serve as a starting-point for their deliberations, and help them to formulate conclusions and recommendations. It does not claim to make a detailed examination of developments observed in the region, nor to provide examples of their wealth and variety; it merely sets out to draw attention to certain trends connected with the items on the provisional agenda.

2. In preparing this document, the Secretariat has drawn on texts published by Unesco and documents communicated by Member States of the Europe region, organizations of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations and international non-governmental organizations. It has also used the final reports of two meetings of experts on MINEDEUROPE III and IV, which were held at the Headquarters of the Organization in 1985 and 1987 respectively, as well as reports by other technical meetings held in the region since 1980.

3. This working document does not claim to provide exhaustive analysis of the aforementioned documentation, still less to provide in-depth analysis of all the questions that the Conference may examine. The participants may well wish to add to the ideas it outlines and to elaborate on them.

4. The plan adopted follows in broad outline the Conference's provisional agenda:

Chapter I is a very brief account of certain trends which have influenced the development of education in the region since the beginning of the 1980s.

The purpose of Chapter II is to draw attention to the aspects of education which are capable of contributing to its humanistic, cultural and international dimensions.

The impact of the new information technologies on education is the subject of Chapter III. The purpose of this chapter is to review the problems raised by technological progress in education, in particular, the introduction of computer technology and its repercussions, at all levels of the education system.

The fourth and final chapter is concerned with regional and international co-operation to develop education in the Europe region; it seeks to identify areas related to future priorities over the coming decade.

I. SOME TRENDS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN EUROPE SINCE THE THIRD CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS

5. The main trends noted by participants at the third Conference of Ministers of Education of the Europe Region, held in Sofia in 1980, have continued with one notable exception. The proportion of public expenditure allotted to education has ceased to decline, and a significant number of countries have even increased expenditure on education in real terms. The extension of education services to certain age-groups has steadily continued in all countries in response to strong demand, despite the low increase in total population and, for the population aged from five to nineteen, a drop of 7 per cent between 1975 and 1985. Total enrolments in education at all levels remained steady at some 240,000,000, owing to the development of pre-school education and the growth of enrolments in higher education. In most States virtually all children are enrolled at primary level, and a rise is taking place in the ratio of enrolments at the secondary and post-secondary levels. In a few decades the region has benefited from a marked improvement in the average level of education of its population. Criticism alleging a lowering of academic standards does not alter these facts, which are proved by recent studies. The information and communication media have also continued to develop spectacularly, and most young people, now better educated, are also better informed. Generally speaking, the intellectual potential of the region has grown uninterruptedly.

6. The scientific and technological development of today's societies, and their growing complexity, which have marked the last few decades, have brought with them a rise in the general level of education and in the basic qualifications needed by all members of society. It is in this context that in several countries of the region, the functional illiteracy of a significant number of adults has become a cause for concern for the authorities and public opinion. These 'illiterates', many of whom have been to school, are incapable of making proper use of the elementary techniques of reading, writing and arithmetic.

7. Since the third Conference of Ministers of Education of the Europe Region, the debate has intensified and taken on new dimensions. Its repercussions have been felt beyond specialist circles, by a public opinion which is increasingly attentive to all aspects of education policies, because of the growth in the demand for education from very varied groups and social categories (women, ethnic, cultural and social minorities, senior citizens, the disabled, etc.). Also visible is the emergence of a major concern for the quality of education, reflected in the unprecedented vigour of the criticism levelled against education and by its widespread calling into question in many countries. These criticisms concern, inter alia, the ultimate purposes of the education system, its social efficacity, its ability to play a part in ongoing or hoped-for changes, and sometimes its potential capacity for guiding or foreseeing change. They also reflect a general growth in awareness of the increasing importance of education, both for the individual and for society.

8. Criticism has often taken the form of public discussion which also draws attention to the economic and financial constraints arising from an increase in social demand, which often raises questions concerning the profitability, quality and organization of education.

Public discussion on education has stressed a number of major trends:

(a) The tendency in a growing number of countries to regard the development of education as a variable which is independent of economic development. Forms of education and educational activities

are diversifying and proliferating: alongside well-structured hierarchical formal systems of education, a large number of organizations, associations, non-governmental institutions and private companies are taking educational action. Education is no longer confined to schools but is developing in industry, in community structures and even in the home. Side by side with this, non-professional cultural activities, supplementing non-formal educational activities, are on the increase. Those responsible for education will undoubtedly have to view the phenomenon of education in all its diversity and define the links between the formal system and the numerous other forms of education, if they are to avoid narrowing the scope of their analysis and proposing partial measures.

(b) The role played by new parties to decision-making and the exercise of authority. Those responsible for education will henceforth need the support of very varied groups of agents in making changes in the education system. Those concerned include administrative authorities and professional groups - teachers, local authorities, cultural associations and associations bringing together the users of education (parents' associations, student associations, etc.).

(c) The increasingly important role attributed to education in action designed to solve certain social problems, which is becoming more and more evident, as is shown by the growing interest in ethical, moral and civic education, and by the inclusion in curricula of new courses of preventive education on safety, the environment, drugs, health, etc.

9. The Europe region is going through a period of profound change and transformation in which a wide range of basic questions is emerging. These questions reflect the uncertainties of a world marked by the upheavals which arise from, inter alia, rapid scientific and technological progress, changes in the structures and organization of production, the restructuring of basic industries and, in several countries, a high rate of unemployment, especially among young people. The region as a whole now has to come to grips with a new situation marked by upheavals and instability which call in question traditional values.

10. For the first time in history, human beings have the means to destroy their own planet, and their power today also extends to genetic engineering. The region is embarking upon a period comparable to no other. The phenomena that have marked its recent development have generally had the common feature of being worldwide. They are not confined within State boundaries, and the interdependence of the major problems of civilization is increasingly manifest. Several countries have undergone demographic changes, sometimes accentuated by the presence of a large population of migrant workers, which in some cases and some sectors gives rise to reactions of rejection. The waste products of industrial society - chemical and nuclear waste, exhaust fumes, etc. - are threatening the natural environment. The very basis of peoples' cultural life is threatened by 'the worldwide influence of a certain number of cultural models, the effects of advertising and the media, the standardization of tastes and life-styles induced by standardized production methods, the erosion of certain traditional values and the difficulty of identifying new ones'.[1] There is a danger here that part of the diversity, hence the wealth, of the cultural heritage will be blotted out.

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1. A practical guide to the World Decade for Cultural Development, 1988-1997, Unesco.

11. Thus society is making new demands of education systems. The hopes placed on education - especially the hope that it will help to solve the problems of society - are reflected in noticeable trends and changes both in the internal coherence of education systems and in their relations with the rest of society.

Owing to the speed of these changes, education systems are faced with serious difficulties. Not only do they lack the means to accomplish what society expects of them, but at the same time as they need coherence and continuity, hence a degree of stability if they are to be efficient, they are also required to renew themselves constantly, at an ever-increasing rate. Furthermore these systems, which need to be able to rely on a set of relatively stable values, are being constructed in an age which is searching for its values and for a new ethic.

In order to play this new role, education systems must also fight against the tendency to accord value only to the utilitarian aspects of their action, which in some cases leads - in the name of short-term efficiency - to reducing the importance attached to the humanistic and cultural dimension and content of education. Experience has shown that such attitudes are harmful to the balance of the education courses provided, and have negative effects both for individuals and for society, since the struggle against the problems defined above is necessarily fought in 'the minds of men', where the 'defences of peace', mentioned in Unesco's Constitution, are constructed. It is therefore very important to conduct a reflection, in accordance with the recommendations of the experts from the Member States of the Europe region who met in 1985 and 1987 to help prepare this present Conference, on the strengthening and development of the humanistic, cultural and international dimension of education.

12. The expansion of education in the broad sense, by diversifying and increasing the number of educational activities, has sought on the one hand to meet needs arising from the changes in employment structures, retraining for new skills, job redeployment and the demands of scientific and technical progress; and on the other, to reinforce the humanistic and cultural dimension of education, and to foster dialogue and solidarity in an interdependent world.

13. The present time is marked by changes in the structures and contents of education, which have often given rise to reforms at one or more levels of education, or of its management, sometimes accompanied by a process of devolution or decentralization of authority. As for structures, it may for example be noted that now that universal compulsory school enrolment has become established, a tendency to prolong schooling has emerged, which, given the rapid spread of pre-primary schooling, is prolonging effective school enrolment to 11, 12 or 13 years in seven countries of the region. Common core curricula have also become widespread, and last longer, while specialized streaming now tends to be put off till later in the school course.

14. The widespread introduction and lengthening of common core curricula meet a twofold concern to provide all with a shared basic education and to vary educational possibilities to match the variety of needs and aspirations, while guaranteeing real equality for the various types of education and training, and the mobility required between them in order to extend the greatest possible opportunities and freedom of choice to all.

15. Education must both meet short-term employment needs and, in particular, play its part in retraining and job redeployment; it must also adapt itself to the uncertain but imminent prospects of scientific and technological development. Employment, with its difficulties, needs and future uncertainties, is a decisive factor in current education policies, as is demonstrated by the great increase in, and diversity of, demands for training.

16. However, it is the qualitative problem as a whole which must be considered if current questions about the future of education are to be thoroughly dealt with: the matching of education now and in the future to the needs of European societies is central to the thinking of specialists and decision-makers. The twenty-first century is no longer the domain of futurology, since the generation starting school in 1988 will not be even 20 years old in the year 2000. It is therefore necessary to examine what changes will be needed to enable education to fit into the context of the enormous social, technological and economic changes taking place, which will deeply affect the lives of individuals and communities in their work, leisure activities and socio-cultural environment.

17. With this in view, the two subjects for reflection proposed for the ministers of education of Europe as regards defining the tasks and prospects for the development of European education at the dawn of a new millennium can be seen to be closely linked.

II. THE HUMANISTIC, CULTURAL AND INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION OF EDUCATION

18. Some shared modes of thought and forms of behaviour go hand in hand in the Europe region with great ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity, resulting in a great wealth and density of cultures. Major movements of humanism and tolerance, and major forces in support of liberation originate in Europe. Despite the vicissitudes of history, exchanges within the region have always been frequent. In modern times, they have largely developed as a result of transport facilities and progress in communications, which have made for the establishment of a multiplicity of commercial, cultural and academic networks. Interdependence is constantly becoming more marked in the region. Recently, mutual consultations have increased and have taken institutional form, encouraged by the lowering of tension between the main protagonists of international political life. If this trend conducive to world peace is to be consolidated and made irreversible, it seems desirable to turn to account contacts between individuals and groups and to make those contacts more fruitful by arousing people's interest in international understanding and co-operation.

19. Several of the world's problems, particularly those relating to the most serious forms of pollution, are of particular concern to the region, where there is a high concentration of arms. The lowering of tension in the region already referred to and the initial results of arms limitations give grounds for a great deal of hope. In view of the region's political and economic weight and its scientific and technological advance, its responsibilities for solving major world problems are enormous. This explains the role that needs to be played in the education of Europeans, young people in particular, by an awareness of their regional and worldwide responsibilities and of the need for close international solidarity.

20. A further reason for emphasizing the international dimension of education in Europe lies in the links that, as a result of historical factors, have long been established between some countries of the region and the Third World. These links are very strong and assume many different forms, especially where universities are concerned; this may make for the further development of relations and the stimulation of interest in the less developed countries.

A. The humanistic, cultural and international dimension of education: a means of harmonious development

21. A reference to the individual is probably one of the best ways of passing lucid judgement on the major problems facing society, finding lasting solutions to them, stimulating a special awareness of the difficulties experienced by young people and facing up more effectively to the uncertainties of change.

22. More than ever before the humanistic, cultural and international dimension of education seems bound to be in the forefront of the concerns of education authorities, educators and society as a whole, and more than ever before the three facets of this humanistic, cultural and international dimension seem to complement one another, so much so that they frequently merge. By providing all human beings without distinction of race, belief or ideology a common frame of reference, the humanistic dimension of education can appreciably change the relations between individuals and between groups. Culture, which constitutes 'a fundamental part of the life of each individual and of each community' (World Conference on Cultural Policies, Mexico City 1982), is a specific attribute of human beings and of society, and thus carries a humanistic message that makes it a key means of communication among peoples.

23. From the standpoint of the Mexico City Conference, the cultural life of a society tends to be expressed through its way of life, its way of being, perceiving and perceiving itself, its behaviour patterns and its systems of values or beliefs. These specific characteristics should be protected from the ever-present risks of loss of identity and standardization brought about by the worldwide dissemination of cultural models external to local cultures. Through an education whose cultural dimension rekindles people's awareness of belonging to a community whose values they assimilate, societies, given a stronger sense of identity, may avoid the temptation of retreating into themselves and may become enriched by contact with others with fewer risks of alienation.

24. The antinomy that is thought in some quarters to exist between culture and science is probably due to applications of science and technology which are not always directed towards humanistic concerns and which generate dangerous situations or make for forms of enslavement. Science and technology, as human achievements, are a part of culture when their sole objective is to satisfy the need felt by humankind to increase its knowledge and improve its lot.

25. The international dimension of education is a matter of constant concern to Unesco, whose essential mission, as defined in its Constitution, is 'to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations' (Constitution, Article I, para. 1).

26. In recent years, the definition of the tasks relating to education for international understanding, co-operation and peace and the safeguarding of human rights, along with the ways and means of discharging them, have gained in precision and scope as a result of acquired experience and taking into account developments in international relations throughout the world. Mention may be made here of the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted by the General Conference in 1974, which confirmed some important conceptual developments, emphasizing the central role of interdisciplinary international education, fitting into a modern, coherent concept of the education system. With regard more specifically to human rights, the international congress held in Vienna in September 1978 developed the principles and methods of human rights teaching. The World Congress on Disarmament Education, held in Paris in 1980, contributed for its part to the development of international education. The implementation of the guidelines contained in the 1974 Recommendation and of the conclusions of those congresses took the form of a large number of activities, the results of which were appraised firstly by the International Conference on Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental freedoms, with a view to developing a frame of mind conducive to the strengthening of security and to disarmament, held in Paris in April 1983, and secondly by the International Congress on Human Rights Teaching, Information and Documentation, held in Malta in August-September 1987.

27. No doubt because they are responsive to deep concerns in the region, the 1974 Recommendation and the conclusions of the Vienna Congress and the Paris Congress have since 1980 inspired a number of follow-up measures in various Member States of the region. These follow-up measures reveal a growing awareness of the need for international education in its full humanistic and

cultural dimension, and demonstrate the significance of the efforts made to this end in the Unesco context.

28. The Associated Schools Project, for instance, which constitutes a signal means of promoting exchanges among schools situated in countries with different socio-political systems, has seen important developments. Mention may be made of the European seminars of the national project co-ordinators held successively in 1982, under the auspices of the Austrian National Commission for Unesco, and in 1984, under the auspices of the Danish National Commission for Unesco, which led to the launching of a programme to organize workshops for teachers in European Associated Schools (workshops have already been held in Czechoslovakia (1985) and in the Federal Republic of Germany (1985/1986)); and the international congress, held in Sofia in 1983, on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the Project, at which there was a particularly large number of European participants. In addition, several countries (Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, German Democratic Republic and Poland) have informed the Organization that the introduction of international education is closely linked to the development of the Associated Schools, which serve as focal points for various activities relating to content, methods and materials and to teacher training.

29. The revision of school textbooks is directly in line with the 1974 Recommendation and concerns a large number of countries, a noteworthy role being played in this connection by the Braunschweig Textbook Institute (Federal Republic of Germany). The revision of history textbooks, with the aim of giving a more objective image of the past and removing from textbooks the reflection of various prejudices, is an occasion for contacts between teachers from various countries (Belgium, France and the Federal Republic of Germany in particular). Reference may also be made to the studies done in Poland in this context, which analyse the content of curricula and textbooks in several fields of study (mother tongue, history and geography).

30. The introduction of international education themes in curricula and the preparation of school textbooks and teachers' guides on those themes are mentioned by several countries. These activities are underpinned by a whole series of research projects in which universities participate, and by seminars and symposia for specialists. A large number of countries mention their interest in United Nations and Unesco publications on these themes. The further training of teachers in preparation for these new tasks is a concern shared by several States. Training is provided by means of one-day study courses (Belgium), seminars (Cyprus) and the use of the media (Poland). A great many national or multinational meetings have also been organized by European States on the themes of international education in the past few years, particularly in Finland, the German Democratic Republic, Norway and Poland. In the German Democratic Republic a practical guide designed to encourage implementation of the 1974 Recommendation has been prepared.

31. Universities have not remained cut off from this movement. Besides the research mentioned above, a network has been set up on the initiative of Unesco and the European Academy of Arts, Sciences and Humanities to facilitate exchanges of teachers and students. Within this framework, courses relating to world problems, the environment, North-South interdependence and scientific future-oriented studies in the service of humanity are to be introduced in Paris universities in 1988-1989.

32. A further feature of the present period is the development of out-of-school education activities (particularly in the form of international clubs, youth clubs and adult education) involving a large number of non-governmental organizations working in the field of international

education. Unesco camps, attended by young people from various European countries, are obviously the place for emphasizing international education.

33. Probably the most important recent developments concern human rights teaching. Such teaching is currently being introduced into school curricula in France. In Luxembourg, a reorganization is planned of the teaching of ethics, providing for the study of human rights, European culture and the rights and duties of the citizen through the ages and throughout the world. In Norway, a working group for the teaching of human rights has been set up which has organized a series of seminars to develop the awareness of teachers, taken steps to revise school curricula and published a teachers' guide. Finland has also published material for use in human rights teaching.

34. These examples, which could be backed up by many more, clearly show how responsive Member States and educators in the region are to these themes, despite the diversity of the situations facing them; they reveal the desirability of a more in-depth study with a view to identifying common trends so as to facilitate co-operation within the region. In point of fact there is at present a very strong demand on the part of society for education systems to be of greater help to young people in acquiring behaviour patterns and values that will enable them to cope successfully with the difficulties of the modern world. Families feel less and less able to perform their traditional educative tasks given the complexity of problems and the uncontrolled proliferation of information; consequently they would like to see greater importance given to the ethical, moral and civic aspects of education as a whole. This development in respect of the sharing of responsibilities goes hand in hand with a desire for decentralization and for increased participation by all those concerned, especially parents, in the functioning of education. The faster pace of technological change is a further argument, based on reasons of efficiency, for a type of education that provides a broad general culture facilitating mobility and redeployment.

B. The content and methods of education with a humanistic, cultural and international dimension

35. The main objectives in respect of the humanistic, cultural and international dimension of education have been identified and considered in greater depth at numerous meetings. The need now is to reflect on how they can be incorporated consistently into renewed curricula on a long-term basis, having regard to the specific characteristics of the region.

36. Educational activities to strengthen international co-operation, understanding and peace or to safeguard human rights cannot be regarded as isolated activities or as adjuncts to traditional programmes. This dimension represents a basic new direction given to all educational activities, even if at certain levels of education, particularly higher education, it takes the form of special courses or indeed of separate streams. Usually the adoption of such an approach leads to a modification and enrichment of the content of traditional disciplines, which should be updated by means of continuing pedagogical research making systematic use of the findings of the social and human sciences, in order to increase the desired impact.

37. In the region, knowledge concerning the society and nation to which an individual belongs, whether that knowledge is historical, cultural or linguistic, is generally the subject of teaching to which pupils devote a major part of their attention and in which they find the sources of their own identity.

38. One should not, however, underestimate the need to improve the teaching of history, geography, literature and other subjects concerned with cultural creation which provide an opportunity for arousing interest in and gaining a better understanding of other communities, in order to instil into such teaching a spirit of scientific objectivity and tolerance, eliminating anything that might inspire mistrust or contempt for other peoples. Of course, the very nature of the history of the region does not make it easy to adopt such an approach. Then again, simply setting out the facts objectively would probably not be enough to bring about the desired attitude; teaching must also show a spirit of real tolerance, with pupils being made to understand that yesterday's adversaries are today's partners, and that their co-operation in a joint endeavour is bound to be beneficial to all. Where such an atmosphere can be established, the themes of peace, disarmament, co-operation and human rights will be recognized as an obligation. This tolerant attitude should be clearly distinguished from condoning acts that violate essential principles, such as for instance respect for human dignity.

39. Admittedly, an effort is being made to remove negative material from school textbooks, but examples are still common of ways of presenting historical facts or the distinguishing features of other groups (neighbouring nations or national minorities) which reflect certain negative stereotypes, and the use of expressions that suggest unfavourable value judgements about them.

40. The wealth of the different literatures of the countries of the region, the complexity of their historical processes and their highly marked cultural specificities account for the considerable importance attached to knowledge of national realities in school curricula, and necessarily cause the subject-matter of international education to be selective. However, not all the potentialities of education systems in this field appear to be exhausted. Instruction in national cultures could for instance be used to prepare students to be responsive to other cultures. If education in respect of national identity were so designed as to reveal national identity as an original form of expression, this would stimulate interest in other cultures. In addition it should be possible, on the lines being studied in several countries, to introduce into curricula activities concerning European culture; this would permit a review of the shared cultural traits and the salient specific features of the different national cultures. Such an education, provided it were carefully designed and prepared, could stimulate many young people to develop further the knowledge thus acquired and to give a positive slant to their civic and personal attitudes. Generally speaking, one cannot over-emphasize the importance of knowledge about the history of civilizations and culture, of major creative thinkers and artists, and of those who explore the frontiers of knowledge, in achieving the aims of education with a humanistic, cultural and international dimension.

41. The humanistic, cultural and international dimension of education could assume its full significance if there were some central focus. A knowledge of mankind is generally provided through a variety of traditional subjects, taught in particular at secondary level (biology, history, geography and philosophy). There seems then to be room for an anthropological dimension, in the broadest sense, which could have an integrating function.

42. Respect for human rights, which is one of the ultimate aims of the humanistic dimension of education, is closely linked to the theme of education for international understanding and peace, while retaining its own characteristics. In view of the legal and political aspects of this question, the grounding acquired by students through anthropological, historical and cultural education should be supplemented by the specific forms of education

described in the numerous publications issued in the wake of the Vienna Congress in 1978.

43. We shall do no more than note that at the pre-school and elementary levels a type of education which is predominantly affective, but nevertheless provides knowledge of certain basic facts and ideas, should be included in the educational process. The various forms of out-of-school education, particularly the educational programmes put out by the media, could for their part help to neutralize the transmission of prejudices through the family.

44. It seems desirable to provide all young people with an education in which suitable attention is paid to the humanistic, cultural and international dimension. Some young people, however, receive vocational training in establishments in circumstances similar to those of an office, a building site or a factory, which enable them to adapt easily to the world of work but in which there is little or no room for general cultural instruction. It is also clear that changing production techniques call for some degree of mobility on the part of workers, and an aptitude for redeployment, which are facilitated by a good general level of education. For these two reasons, it seems advisable to recommend that young people undergo vocational training at as late as possible a stage, and only after attaining a higher level of general instruction; in this way the amount of time needed to prepare them directly for an occupation would be reduced. Prolonging the period in which young people receive an education enabling them to develop their abilities and skills and to gain greater knowledge of themselves, of the society to which they belong and of the international community, can only have a beneficial effect. Such prolongation would have the additional but not negligible advantage of allowing the young people concerned to benefit from guidance that will be more reliable through being given at a later stage, and less alienating because their potential mobility will have been more effectively preserved.

45. By its very nature, international education calls for the application of methods based on participation, and involves the use of the media. Such methods offer enormous facilities for getting to know other countries and cultures and communicating over distances. Great emphasis is laid, and rightly so, by the promoters of international education on the need for materials for use in their work. The problem could be partly solved through the development of common programmes and the establishment of a European bank of films and recordings which would be continuously renewed and accessible to all educational bodies. Such initiatives should be encouraged, as they would afford European specialists in education excellent opportunities to co-operate.

46. The positive aspects of information technologies should not, however, conceal the probllems arising from a superabundance of information which often reveals confused values and priorities. Clearly, one of the important functions of the humanistic, cultural and international dimension of education is to give young people the analytical tools needed to subject this information to critical scrutiny.

47. Exchanges between individuals and visits to foreign countries are an effective means of spontaneously generating interest and fellow-feeling in regard to others. There exists in this connection a particularly rich age-old tradition in Europe. Anything that can develop personal contacts within the region should therefore be encouraged, whether in the form of cultural relations, courses on various subjects for young people, or study tours, etc. The Erasmus programme, which makes it easier for students in the countries of the European Community to continue their studies in other countries of the Community, has really 'got off the ground' and fits into this context. The

free movement of persons, and the forthcoming possibility for any national of the Community to settle in another member country in order to engage in a professional activity there - a possibility facilitated by the work done on the equivalence of diplomas - are both the outcome and the starting-point of a process of integration that transcends the legal aspect of the agreements concluded among States.

48. The preservation and development of the cultural heritage of Europe represent a practical aim of education in the context of its humanistic and international mission. The knowledge that each person may have of his or her own cultural heritage and cultural identity cannot be complete and well-grounded without the ability to see that heritage and that identity within the broad context of Europe and with a feeling of respect for other cultures. In this sense, a deeper sense of both national and European cultural identity may constitute a factor making for co-operation, understanding and also peace.

49. Considered from this angle, it seems essential to improve the teaching of European languages and literatures in order to make them a key means of ensuring better and more wide-ranging mutual knowledge. All the aspects of the cultural life of the people being studied should be examined in a positive spirit when learning the language of that people, in order to provide a better preparation for contacts unaffected by any stereotypes. Introducing bilingual learning at a very early stage, through the efforts currently being made to provide universal pre-school education for all, would probably be the way to achieve the most satisfactory results.

50. The working out of content and methods for the teaching of European languages and civilizations in line with humanistic concerns could give rise, along with other activities relating to the World Decade for Cultural Development 1988-1997, to concerted action by European specialists in education and cultural development. This activity would usefully tie in with the initiatives resulting from the action of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and, in particular, those taken following the suggestions made on the occasion of the Cultural Forum held in Budapest in 1985.

C. Proposals for discussion

51. During their deliberations, the participants in the Conference may wish to deal with the following subjects set out in the form of questions:

(i) What steps should be taken to increase the importance of ethical and cultural values in education, in the context of a modern humanism, and to foster the development of a critical outlook in young people so that they appraise facts and ideas objectively on the basis of an ever-growing volume of information?

(ii) What are the prospects for the development of interdisciplinary forms of education, centred in particular on human beings? How can they be promoted and by what means?

(iii) What are the problems on which international education should be focused, as a matter of priority?

(iv) More and more is being done, both nationally and at the bilateral level, to revise school textbooks; does not the present climate of reduced tension make it possible to go still further and to envisage, for the most receptive disciplines, multilateral co-operation with the object of establishing common guidelines in regard to curricula and school textbooks?

(v) In view of the special importance for international education of educational materials, particularly audiovisual materials, what might be the specific modalities of co-operation for the production and exchange of such materials?

(vi) What can be done to give effect within education systems to the experience gained by the Associated Schools concerning content, methods and materials conducive to international education? To this end, would it not be desirable to launch further experiments and research within the framework of the Associated Schools?

(vii) What can be done to promote activities outside the school system relating to international education?

(viii) How might universities and research bodies in the region be encouraged to show an interest in looking more deeply into the various aspects of the humanistic, cultural and international dimension of education?

(ix) In connection with the World Decade for Cultural Development, would it be possible to decide on the main lines of a plan to develop the teaching of European languages and cultures in a spirit in keeping with the requirements of an education possessing a humanistic, cultural and international dimension?

(x) By what means might training institutions be encouraged to assign the necessary importance to preparing teachers for their tasks in the field of international education?

(xi) On the whole, exchanges of pupils, students and teachers are developing in the region; what means should be employed, at the national and regional levels, to develop these exchanges equally throughout the whole of the region?

52. The participants may be led to reflect on the role that might be played by Unesco in these different fields, in order to help Member States to attain objectives to be chosen by themselves.

III. THE IMPACT OF THE NEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES ON EDUCATION SYSTEMS

53. The changes taking place in the field of information and communication are linked not only to the development of certain new technologies, but also to their huge potential and to the special possibilities opened up when they are used in conjunction with already-established technologies. The term 'New Information Technologies' (NITs) - the adjective 'new' marking the fact that the technologies concerned are in a period of rapid development - designates technologies such as electronics, informatics, telecommunications and video communication, used to produce, store, retrieve and distribute information in analog or digital form. Informatics stands out from all these 'new' technologies in that it makes it possible to integrate the many and varied channels used to transmit different types of messages into Integrated Services Digital Networks (ISDNs). In particular, in addition to this capacity to transmit knowledge at a distance, informatics makes it possible to process information and to speed up the processes of producing and acquiring knowledge, thereby giving mental activity new power. There are those who consider informatics to be the instrument of an 'intellectual revolution'.[1] Its applications in the industrial, economic and social sectors are perceived today by public opinion as being one of the driving forces behind modernization.

54. In western industrialized countries the comparatively rapid penetration of education systems by computers in the last few years may be explained, firstly, as a socio-cultural phenomenon linked to social demand in response to prospective changes in the economic and cultural environment. Some Eastern European countries have already taken the decision to generalize the introduction to informatics and computers throughout the education system, and have begun to apply this decision.[2] In many countries information technologies have been introduced into education, in the hope that they will bring about a necessary and desirable trend towards technical and scientific progress, and that they will enable education systems to operate more relevantly and more efficiently. On the threshold of the twenty-first century, the microcomputer has thus become a symbol of the modernization of education.

55. Up to the beginning of the 1980s, penetration of education by computers was confined to a few experimental projects. The emergence of the microcomputer marked a turning-point. In 1988, it is estimated that there are a million microcomputers in the schools of the EEC countries and something over a million in those of the United States. In the countries most advanced in this field, there is therefore at present one computer for 50 pupils, that is, the possibility of a few minutes' computer practice each day for each pupil; this situation should be considered a half-way stage towards the time when, in one or two decades, each pupil will have a portable personal computer, with suitable software permanently available.

56. Questions therefore arise as to the nature of the present and future influence of this technological progress on education; what developments should be expected; how the short-term situation is to be handled, and what preparations should be made for the changes now under way. Experience acquired over the last decade leads to the conclusion that the problem cannot be reuced to merely making hardware available, and that the introduction of computer technology will imply far-reaching repercussions at all levels of education systems - methods, contents, management, structures, relations between the school and other social institutions and the training of educational personnel.

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1. Report of the International Commission on the Development of Education, 'Learning to be', Unesco, 1972.
2. See document ED-88/MINEDEUROPE/Ref.5.

A. Presentation of the main applications of the New Information Technologies in education

57. The movement of societies towards an information society raises a twofold problem for those responsible for education:

their attitude towards the New Information Technologies (NITs) as a subject to be taught: apart from training for specialists and professionals, what training should be provided for the population as a whole to enable it to live in the society of tomorrow?

the penetration of the education system by NITs and their contribution to education, together with the possible effects of the use of computer aids on cognitive development and the process of acquiring knowledge.

While these problems call for separate analysis, they are nevertheless linked, for the use of the computer as a teaching aid in itself promotes a broad introduction to computer science.

Computer science as a subject to be taught

58. There are two aspects to the question: on the one hand, the place allotted in general education to familiarizing pupils with computers and the new technologies; and on the other, the introduction of systematic instruction in computer science and the associated technologies at certain levels of education.

59. As a subject to be taught, computer science - which has gained its place in the last two or three decades in universities and institutes of technology - has only recently been introduced into general secondary education. It may be either an optional subject or part of compulsory education, with classes of two or three hours a week, for two or three years in the final grades of secondary education. The teaching of computer science is generally based on mathematics and physics and is provided by teachers of these disciplines: emphasis is placed on the need to develop pupils' practical and logical skills, and in some national curricula on industrial applications, for example automation. As regards the various types of vocational training, their contents have undergone very rapid change, following the large-scale introduction of computer applications to the economy. As regards computer technology in basic education, opinions are divided: very few countries in the Europe region have introduced it systematically at this level, while others have limited them to pilot projects.

60. Participants may wish to consider to what extent competence in computer skills should form part of the basic core curriculum to be provided for all in compulsory education, or whether computer training should not preferably be the role of secondary and higher education.

61. The emergence of the concept of an introduction to computer science - sometimes, in order to emphasize its universal nature, called 'computer literacy training' - as an educational priority, has been one of the first visible signs of the impact of computers on school curricula in many European countries. By 'an introduction to computer science' is meant a coherent, graduated set of activities whose purpose is to familiarize pupils and students with computers, their possibilities and their limitation, in order to prepare them for life in a computer society. Two trends may be distinguished:

on the one hand, computer awareness-heightening may have as its aim to improve prospects for integrating students into working life in an increasingly computerized economic environment. In this case curricula emphasize technical familiarity with computers and the learning of programming languages. By contrast with this utilitarian approach, the introduction to computers may be more concerned with their social, economic and cultural consequences. In this case computer science is approached as the science of information processing, and curricula emphasize the ability to manage information and to use data networks and bases: and also the ethical and aesthetic aspects, such as the safeguarding of individual liberties or the emergence of new forms of cultural expression.

62. It should however be noted that in many countries, as the computerization of society becomes an increasingly familiar phenomenon, more and more people, whether young people or adults, have their first contact with a microcomputer as an instrument of work at home, in the office, at university or by playing interactive electronic games; and that they have received basic instruction in word processing, information retrieval or the management of data bases in a very great variety of ways such as training provided by manufacturers, company training courses, television, distance education, and informal exchanges with those more experienced than themselves. In many European States out-of-school computer activities have been developed in the form of computer clubs or camps. Some countries have successfully made available computer centres both to schoolchildren and the general public, with the particular aim of providing an introduction to the use of computers in management. The increased production in many countries of specialized reviews for young computer enthusiasts is also proof of the relative computer acculturation of young people at school.

63. However, media education, and the introduction to audiovisual techniques and to the critical interpretation of messages transmitted by the mass media, where they exist at all, remain an educational activity distinct from an introduction to informatics, as if educational authorities had not yet realized all the consequences of the very real complementarity between information technologies and the mass media. Yet these two systems have a point in common in the interactive video disk, which makes it possible to introduce visual sequences into software. Images are a medium which it is still difficult for the educator to handle; they open up the world of the imagination, whereas computer science is made up of logical procedures. Media education has usually been entrusted to teachers of literary, social or aesthetic disciplines, whereas computer science is in the hands of scientists or information scientists. Much therefore remains to be done to promote an integrated approach to NITs in education.

64. The extent to which computers will affect employment and the resulting implications are controversial subjects. According to a recent ILO study, most European countries forecast a shortage of computer professionals in the next two decades. Other surveys conclude that only a small proportion of all the jobs that will be created over this period will require specialized computer training. It is argued that application software developed by specialists will be constantly available to aid the various categories of users in their daily tasks of calculation, design, research, drafting, management or diagnosis, and that in order to use this increasingly user-friendly software, only the briefest initial training will be necessary, for example in typing and keyboard manipulation.

65. Specialists are considering the question of the usefulness of computer science as a subject in general pre-university education; also its eventual linkage with higher education courses. There is some disagreement as to the

specific educational value of computer science and the need to create a body of specialist teachers. Some specialists are fully in favour. Others think that computer science constitutes a new way of reasoning, not merely an additional school subject. They argue that this new approach to knowledge, through the handling of instruments which facilitate access to it, should be gradually integrated into the teaching of all subjects and at all levels of education, and that all teachers should be encouraged to use computers as an instrument in their work.

66. In the light of their national objectives, participants may wish to discuss the desirability of investing heavily in 'computer-literacy training' and if so, what direction should be given to such training, bearing in mind the need to prepare future generations for life in an 'information and communication' society and to understand and master its languages and mechanisms.

Computers as teaching and learning aids

67. Multi-purpose use of NITs for teaching and learning is developing at school, at home and in vocational training, and computer applications have been tried out in all aspects of the educational process: motivation, diagnosis, the presentation of information, training, memorization, problem-solving, testing and marking. In Computer Assisted Teaching (CAT) several different applications may be distinguished according to the degree of initiative left to the user, whether teacher or pupil. However, the whole range of possibilities opened up by computer-assisted techniques has not yet been exhausted; efforts have been concentrated - and this is particularly evident in the courseware designed for primary education - on cashing in on the possibilities of graphic presentation rather than on the use of data processing capacity. A new category of software, on which great hopes have been placed, is beginning to be tried out in some countries: these are 'intelligent' educational aids which use artificial intelligence techniques and are capable of interpreting, evaluating and correcting the pupil's responses and of proposing learning strategies adapted to the individual.

68. Microcomputers may also be used by pupils as working tools. Thus alongside curricula specially designed for teaching, increasing use is made, in various disciplines, of general-purpose computer aids (word processing, spreadsheets, file managers, etc.), in addition to the consultation of data bases as a means of processing data. This is an approach containing the seeds of a fundamental overhaul of educational contents and methods, in which education would no longer seek to transmit and acquire knowledge, but would aim to construct autonomous systems of knowledge on the basis of already accumulated data, by means of data processing techniques. The purpose would then be to develop the pupil's reasoning powers, imagination and creativity, as well as the ability to pass critical judgement on the result of the man-machine dialogue. The Logo language, sometimes used to introduce young children to mathematical concepts, also seeks to develop the cognitive capacities.

69. Computer science has infinitely greater educational potential than that provided by other technologies. As an aid, computer technology already makes it possible to adapt teaching to the needs of each pupil, at his or her rate of work, level of knowledge, and intellectual aptitude, hence to diversify the individual's educational progress, and to individualize teaching. This has proved particularly useful in specific applications such as back-up teaching

and the provision of equal opportunities for special groups, in particular the handicapped. However, computers using formal languages throw up new professional types of jargon which are mixtures of natural and machine languages. In some countries computerization has even made it necessary to use a foreign language in education. The effects of the development of computerization on the diversity of national languages and cultures should be examined closely, and might be the subject of a comparative international study similar to the systematic international survey of the effects of computers in the learning of the basic subjects which has been undertaken by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), an NGO specialized in surveys of academic attainment. The results of the survey will become available over the next few years.

70. Studies already conducted into the effects of CAT have yielded the following provisional conclusions:

the use of computers has the effect of improving the performance of students in comparison with what is obtained by traditional methods, but such improvement is similar to that obtained with other innovative methods;

it is the weaker students that seem to benefit most from CAT;

progress declines as the period of instruction lengthens;

the higher the level of education (ranging from elementary to higher education), the smaller the benefit from CAT seems to be; at secondary level, simulation exercises by computer are those that give the best results from the cognitive point of view.

71. It may thus be assumed that CAT increases learning capacity, but it is not yet clear what is its most effective form. Its impact on curricula content is not obvious; either the courseware used has been designed in the context of traditional courses, or the computer techniques used develop aptitudes which are not measured when achievement is evaluated. Insufficient data is available on the effects of computer applications other than CAT, in particular the computerized direction of class work, using traditional teaching tests, exercises and other forms of inspection. Generally speaking, progress achieved in using computers as an instrument of learning is still far behind expectations. It is noticeable that all these studies lack an underlying theory of learning capable of explaining how computers may or may not assist in the acquisition of knowledge. It is this factor that lends particular interest to the longitudinal comparative and intercultural study on the effects of computers on the development of children which has just been undertaken by the L. Zhivkova Foundation and the Bulgarian authorities, with support from Unesco. The study is concerned, not with the acquisition of knowledge, but with cognitive skills and the ability to learn how to learn, which the computer might help to develop.

72. Participants may wish to examine the question of how to remedy the quantitative and qualitative inadequacy of research on the use of computers for teaching purposes. The renewal of teaching methods through the use of NITs and the creation of high-quality programmes will necessarily require a considerable research effort which should be promoted without delay both at the national and the European levels.

Computers as a management aid

73. Computers are fairly widely used in management in many European countries, in both educational institutions and systems. In schools, microcomputers are used to keep accounts, to keep and follow up student's files and examination marks and to manage libraries and teaching materials, etc. In central management, computers provide administrators with a means of processing and analysing the data flows required to manage staff, buildings and budgets, and to draw up forecasts. Computerized management, which frequently leads to greater involvement of local authorities in data collection and greater rationalization of administrative procedures, tends to reduce the gaps between centralized and decentralized systems.

Prospective new uses of NITs

74. Generally speaking, most applications that have been mentioned up to now have been developed within the framework of educational institutions and have consisted in 'taming' NITs by adapting their use to existing constraints and traditional operating procedures, be these the organization of courses, the definition of the tasks and responsibilities of teachers and pupils, or the installation of equipment, usually in special classrooms. However, an examination of the impact of NITs on education systems also requires a forward-looking approach which takes into account predictable developments in this field.

75. The most innovative applications will doubtless consist in associating in complementary fashion the various information and communication technologies in a multimedia approach (microcomputers, tape recorders and video-disks). Combinational techniques of this kind have made it possible to renew the teaching of reading and writing skills and literacy training methods, and have opened up fresh prospects for interactive language learning. In some countries there are proposals to experiment with computer-aided inter-school link-ups at both primary and secondary level; in teaching institutions, computer-assisted publishing of school magazines and educational material is already possible.

76. Few experiments aim at modifying traditional teaching configurations or exploring the potential of NITs as regards the organization and operation of education services. NITs are being successfully used, on a limited scale for the purposes of vocational training and further training, in large firms, branches of the civil service and the armed forces. These are training systems made up of learning units which are assembled in modular form in order to meet specific needs, and are not subject to the usual space-time constraints. The introduction of such systems presupposes a division of labour and differentiation of educational tasks, (the design and development of materials, tutoring and evaluation) and leads to a more rational distribution of work, both within the institution and between the institution and outside bodies such as teaching centres and centres which produce teaching aids.

77. If the constraints and lack of flexibility habitual to school establishments can be overcome, NITs might be used to promote the emergence of new ways of organizing education and of parallel or complementary training systems in which an institution, with premises at several sites making use of local networks, might combine self-instruction assisted by videotex and distance teaching, either on-line or off-line, in group centres or in the home. Access to information, by means of digital optical disks and data processing link-ups, is no longer dependent on the presence of a teacher or even the existence of a library. The bringing together of audiovisual aids and computers is already opening up new horizons for distance teaching. Some

private companies and a number of State or semi-public bodies make a very great variety of courses available to the public against payment. Access to these services is by videotex, and there is also the possibility of exchange and individual follow-up.

78. Given the increasing social demand for education and the need to bring about an overall rise in the level of qualifications, in view of predictable changes in the world of work, NITs could help to increase the productivity of education and training institutions, in particular at secondary and post-secondary level, since they facilitate the optimum use of facilities and the involvement of new participants, especially companies and local authorities, in educational activity.

79. The introduction of NITs into education is only beginning, and is still feeling its way. The disparity of the ends sought, the variety of methods and programmes, and the differences inherent in the socio-cultural environment and educational style peculiar to each society, as well as psychological and institutional blocks, call for the greatest prudence. It is therefore difficult to forecast what the impact of NITs will be on the operation of education systems, since despite the steps taken to provide equipment, NITs have not yet reached the 'critical mass' (as regards access time to terminals, high-quality software and computer services, and teacher training) from which it will be possible to draw generally valid conclusions, and research has as yet indicated no major trend. And yet the computer revolution is here to stay. In the industrialized societies NIT applications have brought about far-reaching changes in the conditions and structure of work in other sectors. The question is whether the education system will be able to remain isolated from these development; and whether it is not the role of education to lead the way and prepare for change. If this is the case, many questions which are as yet unanswered might be the subject of fruitful exchange programmes at regional level, for example:

> What are the skills and knowledge which will be needed when there is widespread easy access to information? How should education prepare future citizens to live in a world of computers?
>
> What should be the approach to teaching and learning when everyone has a pocket computer as powerful as the largest computers of today?
>
> What changes should be expected in the structure and organization of education?
>
> Which developments should be encouraged, and which ruled out?

B. Conditions governing implementation

80. The experience of the last decade has shown that spontaneous development, or laissez-faire policies concerning the introduction of NITs into education, have often led to impaired functioning. The fact is that the provision of hardware and software should coincide with the training of personnel, and real strategies should be developed for the introduction of innovations, taking account of the rapid pace of technical change in the field of NITs.

Production of hardware

81. The variety of existing standards in the computer field has led education authorities in some countries to adopt equipment policies in order to ensure the coherence and compatibility necessary for the exchange,

maintenance and circulation of software; also to prepare specifications to enable administrators to choose from the various products available on the market. Experience with audiovisual aids has shown that the education market on its own is not sufficient to encourage manufacturers to produce custom-made equipment, the cost of which, given the uncertainty of demand, would be prohibitive. Schools are equipped with products made for the general public. However, the potential scope of the education market for computer aids might lead to co-operation between education authorities and manufacturers, either in order to develop custom-built hardware at lesser cost than that at present, or to agree upon advantageous terms for markets guaranteed over a number of years. In addition, a study should be made of the Florence Agreement[1] on the importation of educational, scientific and cultural materials, and its Nairobi Protocol, to see to what extent they might be applied to computers.

Production of educational software and creation of a computer environment

82. Despite their marked proliferation, educational software and courseware in general are at present very largely of poor quality, and the shortage of efficient programmes is in all cases the most visible obstacle to the development of NITs in education. After experiments with different formulae (software design by teachers, software design by comptuer specialists), there is fairly general agreement today that the most efficient design approach for educational software is in almost every case a team consisting of a subject specialist, a learning specialist, a computer scientist and a communication specialist; and that the production of software, like any other product, requires an editing process. Developing programmes is time-consuming and expensive, and production capacity in both the public and the private sectors is still limited: in a recent seminar, it was reckoned to be less than 200 programmes a year for all the EEC countries. Resort to 'author systems', i.e. types of software designed to provide assistance in the individual production of courseware, is only a partial solution to the problem; this type of software is mainly used in schools for adapting and complementing high-quality educational software.

83. In some countries the production and dissemination of educational software is left entirely to the private commercial sector, occasionally subsidized from public funds. This commercial policy naturally leads to giving priority to home use and self-instruction, which is likely to create problems of inequality of access for certain social groups, for example the disabled. Other countries have both a public and a private sector which are to some extent complementary, with manufacturing and approval licences. Publishers are often reluctant to invest in developing educational software. Owing to the limited number of institutions in the market, with only one or very few copies of a given programme being purchased by each institution, the production of a particular item of software is specially uneconomic when it is sophisticated and intended for specialized use. Again, the evaluation systems and procedures for approval established by education authorities to help teachers and institutions to choose high-quality products have the disadvantage of discouraging the use of products that are innovative but designed outside the system and different from the methods and programmes in current use. Lastly, few types of educational software, especially at the first levels of education, are culturally neutral, and it has proved difficult, if not impossible, to use them in new contexts. For this reason, few items of courseware can be exchanged between countries.

1. The Florence Agreement (1950) provides for permanently or temporarily duty-free importation for educational, scientific and cultural materials imported by an organization or institution approved for that purpose by the authorities of the importing country.

84. The production of high-quality software is obviously a challenge to the international community. However, praiseworthy efforts have already been made to encourage international co-operation in this field, especially within the European communities and as part of Unesco's Intergovernmental Informatics Programme. These efforts relate either to co-production, various forms of which have been tried out, the creation of design teams, or information regarding existing products. Participants may wish to report on their national experience in this field and to examine means of strengthening and extending existing co-operation.

85. Computerized services are still insufficiently developed to meet the needs of education. Contrary to the practice observed in other sectors, such as finance, the economy and law, virtually no data banks exist for the various school subjects, because of the limited demand from educational establishments. Projects to set up item banks and control tests have had little success. The major encyclopaedias and dictionaries available on digital optical disks are still an exception. On the other hand, there are signs of the growth of remedial courses and assistance to pupils in their homework by means of pay videotex. The use of remote host centres to obtain administrative information is beginning to develop in some universities. In the research field, universities and specialized institutions already have access to all kinds of scientific or technical data through networks such as EURONET and EARN.

86. Participants may wish to discuss, with a view to international co-operation, the desirability of assisting education authorities in setting up such computerized services for education, and possible ways of doing so.

Training education personnel

87. Teacher training has been considered by many Member States of the Europe region a sine qua non for the development of computer science in education. Whatever the changes in strategies, methods and even mentalities, the teacher is still irreplaceable. All studies so far carried out have emphasized the correlation between the educational impact of NITs and the quality of the educators. It is the teacher who decides how to use the aid, which may be applied either as a back-up for traditional discursive teaching, or to active methods calling for discovery and creativity, whether in individual work, where the pupil is alone with the computer, or in socialization and team work. Training strategies give priority to teachers now employed in schools, with training possibilities ranging from two week introductory courses to the use of computers in education to more systematic training lasting from 700 to 1,000 hours, designed to train specialists, software designers or teacher trainers. In some countries more than 50 per cent of all teachers concerned have already benefited from one of these short training courses, and most countries intend to continue their efforts in this field. The purposes for which computers are introduced into education determine what categories of teachers are chosen: these may be teachers of mathematics, physics, management or industrial technology; or volunteer teachers in all subjects at secondary level, or even primary-school teachers. In some countries training in the use of computers as management or teaching aids has also been provided for school

heads and supervisory staff. In some cases, training is paid for by traditional institutions; in others, specialized structures, for example further training centres have been set up for particular purposes such as bringing closer together traditionally separate, or even clearly compartmented, scientific, technical and educational skills. Useful back-up structures have also been set up in some countries, either in the form of resource centres to provide information, counselling, organizational and continuing education services at local level, or in the form of the provision of self-training equipment.

88. Such training has usually been provided on an individual basis for volunteer teachers, but what is now needed is an approach dealing with schools globally as educational units. Short training courses have usually been slanted towards showing teachers how to handle computers; in the best of cases, they are familiarized with their specifically educational applications. Such courses are too short to provide a basis for completely revising the approach to teaching methods. Further, little interest has been shown in presenting computers as an aid to teachers in their daily tasks of information retrieval and processing, the production of documents, and the work of devising exercises, correcting, marking and monitoring subsequent progress of pupils. Yet is is only if educators themselves use information technologies in carrying out their own work as teachers and trainers that these technologies will make a real breakthrough in the education system. Today, for the pre-service training of teachers who will still be working in the year 2025, the introduction of computer technology in all its forms in training programmes and activities is a question of vital importance for the future of education. Such training, both theoretical and practical, and including all aspects of the teacher's job, should gradually become an integral part of vocational training for all educational personnel at all levels of education and whatever their functions.

89. Participants may wish to consider in what ways the various uses of NITs might be integrated into pre-service training programmes, and what forms continuing education activities might take, in the light of different countries' national experience in this respect.

Costs

90. It is difficult to make a cost analysis for NITs, partly bcause of the range of different technologies and their varying impact on the costs of the education system, and partly because of ongoing changes in the price and quality of equipment. The cost of equipment has fallen spectacularly over the last 10 years; it now represents only a very small proportion of direct costs, estimated by some experts at 20 per cent. The most important cost factors have proved to be the development of software and teacher training, to which should be added both maintenance and R&D costs. The widespread use of NITs will entail changes in the structure of the budgets of educational establishments, especially because of the growth in investment expenditure both on equipment and on the production of software, with the corresponding amortization, operating costs arising from data processing link-ups and the rental of computer services, and consequent staff costs. These readjustments between the different items of expenditure may lead to quite a different allocation of costs among the various users. In particular an increase may be foreseen in the number of entries for operating costs, supplies and equipment, which are in some cases financed, in varying degrees depending on the country, by families and local authorities. However, at the present stage, where NITs have

changed neither the organization nor the content of education, these are in all cases simply additional costs, except for the cost of computerized management.

Strategies

91. The introduction of NITs entails the implementation of overall plans and programmes. In this respect, the countries of the Europe region fall into two groups: those that have adopted a policy by sector, concentrating their resources on technical and vocational training, the primary aim being the teaching of computer science and its applications in various fields of activity; and those that have adopted a global policy, the purpose of which is to introduce NITs simultaneously at different levels both as a subject of education and as a teaching aid. It may nevertheless be observed that social pressure has made it difficult in most countries to circumscribe and limit the spread of computers in schools. As regards the actual introduction of NITs, two approaches may be distinguished: one moving from the centre towards the periphery, accelerating the spread of NITs and remedying inequalities arising from imbalances between regions or between institutions, for example the disparity between urban and rural centres and between State and private schools; the other based on action at the local level or by educational establishments, reflected in development which is better integrated, but gradual and unequal. These efforts have generally been made at school level. In most countries, no systematic steps have been taken to support the development of computer science in lifelong education, either in teacher training or in the setting up of appropriate facilities.

92. There appears to be no doubt that efforts should henceforth be made to bring about better co-ordination between the production of educational software, personnel training and financial resources, while taking account of the inevitable resistance to all innovations, as well as the rapid obsolescence of the present situation. The importance of a global, simultaneous approach to all the components of the education system should also be stressed, in order to avoid contradictions and duplication and to establish continuity at the various levels. However, the greatest difficulty arises from the need for a simultaneous approach to the impact of NITs at two levels, which act on each other: that of the basic education unit and the act of educating, and that of the organization and structures of the education system itself.

93. In the future, educational institutions must find a balance between closing in upon themselves, which might well isolate them from contemporary culture, and an excessive openness to all currents of information, which would make them run the risk of losing their specific instructional and educational function, which is based on personal contacts and exchange between educators and those being educated. It is as socializing agents that schools distinguish themselves from the other systems of training and further training that will be available to the information society. In accomplishing this, care should be taken to avoid two pitfalls: that of projecting on to the education system of tomorrow the technologies of today, and that of using the new technologies to prop up the existing system, thereby delaying much-needed change in contents and methods. The ideal strategy would consist, on the one hand, in meeting present needs by ensuring that schools do not fall behind developments in society; and on the other, in preparing for predictable changes by increasing the number of future-oriented pilot experiments, in a spirit of open-mindedness and flexibility.

94. Between 1988 and 1990, a large number of national plans or programmes drawn up in the preceding years will come to completion; they are at present

being evaluated. Participants may wish to communicate the initial results of these evaluations, the conclusions that have been drawn from them, what follow-up measures are proposed, and in particular, what remedial action might be taken. The signs are that, after a period of euphoria, we are now moving towards greater selectivity in the deployment of NITs.

95. On the basis of these results and in the light of the considerations set out in this chapter, especially in paragraphs 81, 87, 92, 104, 106 and 109, participants may wish to discuss the following questions:

what strategies may be proposed to avoid, on the one hand, wasting resources, and on the other, discriminating between schools, in particular, creating an imbalance between the State and the private sectors;

how provision can be made for the short term and, at the same time, preparations be made for the profound changes that the spread of NITs to all sectors of activity will unfailingly bring about in the education system. It is to be anticipated that widespread access to information and communication systems will gradually bring into question not only the contents, methods and techniques of education, but also the operation and organization of education systems;

participants may wish to envisage ways and means of regional co-operation which might aim at building up a large-scale network for the exchange of experience and documentation; and consider the possibility of launching joint action as regards the training of educational personnel, the provision of educational software, and research and development.

IV. PRIORITIES AND MODALITIES FOR REGIONAL AND INTERREGIONAL CO-OPERATION IN EDUCATION

96. Various possibilities for developing co-operation have been suggested in the preceding pages in respect to the discussion topics on the provisional agenda. This final part will review briefly the existing policy framework for co-operation in the field of education within Europe and between regions, the broad subject areas which might be suitable for priority attention in the near future, and the modalities and mechanisms which are or could be available to facilitate and promote co-operation.

Unesco's policy framework for co-operation

97. Unesco's policies and major programmes are global in scope, comprising international and interregional activities, as well as some intended for a specific region or group of countries. Hence co-operation within the Europe region needs to be considered first of all with reference to overall programme objectives and activities as set forth in Unesco's Medium-Term Plan (C/4) and its biennial programme and budget (C/5 approved). Document ED-88/MINEDEUROPE/Ref.3 reviews Unesco's activities in Europe since MINEUROPE III in this perspective and gives many examples of the active participation of Member States of the region in Unesco's global programmes, as well as in activities specific to Europe. Regional co-operation may thus be considered complementary to other forms of international co-operation under the auspices of Unesco.

98. Unesco's several normative instruments in the field of education serve as another policy frame of reference. Two examples may illustrate how these instruments can be relevant for co-operation in the Europe region. The Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees concerning Higher Education in the States belonging to the Europe Region (1979) marked a major step forward and provides a basis for further developments. In a quite different area, the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1974), which is global in scope, sets forth principles and standards which provide an agenda for co-operative action particularly in respect to the humanistic, cultural and international dimension of education, as discussed in Part II.

99. Certain major undertakings of the Organization and the international community constitute further frames of reference for co-operation. For example, in respect to the humanistic, cultural and international dimension of education, the World Decade for Cultural Development (1988-1997), International Literacy Year (1990), the Plan for the Development of Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace, and the Plan for the Development of Human Rights Teaching - all offer policy guidelines elaborated by the Member States. The Intergovernmental Informatics Programme could serve a similar role for co-operation relating to computers in education.

100. More specific to the Europe region, the recommendations of the three previous sessions of MINEDEUROPE (1967, 1973, 1980) have guided Unesco's action in the region and were instrumental in establishing the European Centre for Higher Education (CEPES) and other mechanisms (e.g. CODISEE[1]) to foster closer co-operation. Whereas the first two conferences focused on higher education, MINEDEUROPE III considered issues relating to the entire education system and identified four lines of emphasis for the development of education during the 1980s, namely the need:

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1. Programme of Co-operation in Research and Development of Educational Innovation in South and South-East Europe.

to intensify international co-operation in the field of education and in particular to institute a regular exchange of information and experience regarding education among the Member States of the Europe region and with the Member States of other regions;

to amplify research and develop joint work on the content, methods and organization of the education process at the various levels;

to continue efforts to democratize education, in particular by working for closer correspondence between education, science and culture and the other activities of the life of society;

to take account, in the development of education in the Europe region, of the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session (Final Report).

101. Unesco's action in the region has also been inspired by the principles agreed in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (Helsinki, 1975) and the relevant conclusions reached during the follow-up meetings.[1] In view of the current climate of improving relations between the countries of Eastern and Western Europe, Unesco's action in this context may assume even more importance in the years ahead, particularly since Unesco is the only intergovernmental organization offering to both parts of Europe a framework for co-operation in education, science, culture and communication.

102. Thus MINEDEUROPE IV occurs at a promising juncture and could make a significant contribution to co-operation in the field of education into the coming decade. MINEDEUROPE IV is expected to contribute to the collective deliberations leading to the adoption of Unesco's third Medium-Term Plan which, together with the more detailed biennial programmes and budgets, will then provide a general framework for co-operation within the region and between Member States in all regions.

Co-operation through other intergovernmental bodies

103. Any deliberation on regional co-operation in the field of education must take into account also the relevant activities undertaken or planned by other intergovernmental bodies active in the Europe region, particularly the Council of Europe, the Commission of the European Communities (CEC), the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), the Council of Nordic Ministers of Education and Culture, and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). For example, the Council of Europe has organized several conferences on academic mobility and has carried out major projects on innovations in primary education and language teaching. Co-operation among the member countries of the European Community has been enhanced through the launching of programmes such as the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS) and the Programme for the Development of Co-operation between Universities and Enterprises (COMETT). The conferences of ministers of higher education of the member countries of the CMEA have also adopted measures to promote co-operation in higher education

1. See the report Unesco's contribution to the development of co-operation in the Europe region and to the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, presented to the Vienna Meeting (1986) of representatives of the participating States.

and research. An indication of the scope of co-operative activities undertaken by some of these bodies, together with their member states, in the area of computers in education is presented in document ED-88/MINEDEUROPE/Ref.5.

104. Unesco's recent experience in co-operating with other intergovernmental organizations active in the Europe region has been promising, but limited. Beyond the shared concern to avoid duplication of effort, there are several areas of convergence of interest where consultation, co-ordination and/or joint action could lead to more effective achievements benefiting the Member States concerned. Consultations and exchanges of information between the secretariats of certain of these organizations and Unesco have improved in recent years, and the Director-General of Unesco has taken initiatives to explore with them possibilities for closer co-ordination and even joint action, such as the All-European Conferences of Directors of Educational Research Institutions, which are now organized jointly by the Council of Europe and Unesco.

105. The Council of Europe, through its biennial Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education, has been instrumental in promoting closer contacts between the organizations serving its member states. The 15th session of the Standing Conference (Helsinki, May 1987) adopted a resolution on European co-operation on education in which, inter alia, the Ministers 'welcome the ongoing contacts between Unesco, OECD, the Council of Europe, the institutions of the European Communities and the Nordic Council of Ministers designed to ensure timely co-ordination of their activities in the educational field'. They also welcomed 'recent CDCC[1] contacts and joint meetings on education with Eastern European countries and urge the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to identify concrete matters of common interest in the field of education and science with Eastern European countries taking into account the third Medium-Term Plan (1987-1991)' (i.e. of the Council of Europe). MINEDEUROPE IV may be the appropriate forum to underscore this political will for better co-ordination of effort and to consider Unesco's role in this process.

Unesco's mechanisms for co-operation and target groups

106. Unesco offers its Member States in the Europe region numerous mechanisms and structures for multilateral co-operation in the field of education, both for consultation and for programme implementation. In respect to the former, high level All-European consultations have become well established through the series of conferences of ministers of education (MINEDEUROPE) convened by Unesco. These conferences provide a forum for consultations on general policy issues, and their recommendations have led to the establishment of several mechanisms to promote and facilitate co-operation between countries and between institutions in the field of education. The expert meetings organized to follow-up and to prepare the conferences has provided opportunities for interim consultations.

107. Other consultative bodies, which provide opportunitites to consult on specific programme matters and orient joint activities, include:

the Advisory Committee of CEPES;

the Regional Committee for the Application of the Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees concerning Higher Education in the States belonging to the Europe Region;

1. Council for Cultural Co-operation.

the Co-ordination Group of CODIESEE;

the occasional regional seminars of national co-ordinators of the Associated Schools Project (ASP).

Furthermore, the occasional meetings of the Unesco National Commissions of the region are occasions for such consultations.

108. As regards programme implementation in the area of higher education, Unesco's regional activities are carried out principally through CEPES (Bucharest), which was established in 1972 following a recommendation of MINEDEUROPE I. CEPES serves as a structure for the exchange of information, ideas and experience among all countries of the region. Over the years it has acquired increasing recognition and the confidence of higher education authorities and institutions, as well as of professional bodies and the academic community.

109. Most of Unesco's activities in the region in respect to other programme areas are carried out by Headquarters or through CODIESEE. However, certain regional activities are conducted by the Unesco Institute of Education (UIE, Hamburg), the International Bureau of Education (IBE, Geneva), and the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP, Paris); although global in scope, all three are located in Europe and use the intellectual resources of the region, while serving as structures for interreginal co-operation. Unesco structures in related fields, such as the newly-established Regional Office for Science and Technology for Europe and North America (ROSTENA, Venice), could also assist with specific activities related to their field of competence.

110. The networking approach underlines several programmes and mechanisms, notably CODIESEE, the joint studies programme in education carried out by the Unesco National Commissions in the region, and the inter-university network for training of higher education staff and researchers. These networks, which have demonstrated their effectiveness, are being encouraged to co-operate more closely among themselves and also with the networks for educational innovation established in other regions[1].

111. In addition, Unesco provides technical and financial assistance to Unesco National Commissions (e.g. for the joint studies programme), a number of specialized European institutes (such as the European Information Centre for the Further Education of Teachers, at the Charles University, Prague, and the European Centre of Education, Frascati) and numerous non-governmental organizations. Also, as seen above, it co-operates with certain intergovernmental organizations in carrying out activities of mutual interest.

112. These various structures and mechanisms[2] enable Unesco to carry out its programmes and to stimulate, facilitate and, to some extent, co-ordinate related activities initiated by its partners. In effect, Unesco's activities are addressed to a variety of partners and target groups. As an intergovernmental organization, Unesco's prime partners in the field of education are naturally the concerned ministers and senior officials,

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1. The Impact Evaluation of the Regional Networks of Educational Innvoation for Development, which includes CODIESEE, was completed in 1988; the report (document 129 EX/INF.7) is available to MINEDEUROPE delegations on request.
2. Unesco's programmes and mechanisms for co-operation in education in the Europe region are presented in document ED/88/MINEDEUROPE/Ref.3.

especially in regard to activities concerning policy matters and governmental decisions.

113. Another category of activities relates to specific problems or themes of a technical nature and consequently are addressed to persons with a high level of expertise and relevant experience, including researchers, educators, and other specialists, who generally participate in their personal capacity. These individuals and their respective institutions and associations are simultaneously an important source of expertise and a major target group for Unesco.

114. A third category of activities is addressed to the general public or to certain large groups, such as students, youth, or adult learners. Some of these activities offer possibilities for direct participation in Unesco's action, e.g. through the Associated Schools Project, Unesco Clubs, the Co-Action Programme, as well as through certain activities organized by NGOs with Unesco's assistance, such as international workcamps, science camps, etc.

Areas of co-operation

115. Unesco's current activities in the Europe region cover a wide variety of subject areas and concern all levels of education. Co-operation in higher education has developed considerably since MINEDEUROPE I and the establishment of CEPES[1]. In response to shared concerns expressed over the years, Unesco has promoted regional co-operation in such areas as environmental education, teacher training, prevention of functional illiteracy, education and work, access of girls and women to education, teaching of foreign languages, adult education, content and methods, education of migrant workers and disabled persons, technical and vocational education, primary education, etc. Probably most of these subject areas remain relevant for co-operation within the region and merit a place in Unesco's future programme. In addition, during its discussions on items 7(a) and 7(b) of the provisional agenda (cf. Parts II and III of this document), the Conference will have considered the need for new or strengthened co-operation in the areas of international education and computers in education.

116. The Conference is invited to specify which aspects of these latter areas are particularly suited to regional co-operation and which other areas or themes merit priority attention. For instance, if environmental education were considered a priority for co-operation, the Conference could indicate if Unesco's action should focus, for example, on curriculum development, on teacher training, on public information, or on the ethical issues involved. In this regard, Unesco's 'comparative advantage' should be taken into account, in terms of its constitutional mandate and global structure, as well as its working relations with other intergovernmental organizations, National Commissions for Unesco, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and professional institutions.

117. In selecting priority areas for co-operation, the Conference is invited to bear in mind the international dimension of co-operation and in particular certain global Unesco programmes intended to benefit the developing countries, such as those to extend and improve science education, to develop technical and vocational education, and particularly those to eradicate illiteracy, as well as certain kinds of operational activities, including funds-in-trust projects and the International Fund for the Development of Physical Education and Sport (FIDEPS).

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1. See document ED-88/MINEDEUROPE/Ref.3, paragraphs 103-119.

118. Where there are areas of widely shared concern, the objectives and programmes for collective action will of course need to be determined by all parties concerned. Certain forthcoming events offer occasions for such consultation: the Second International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (Moscow, November 1988), the 41st session of the International Conference on Education (Geneva, January 1989) and the International Congress on Education and Informatics (Paris, April 1989). In regard to the latter, the countries of the Europe region, as the most experienced in this area, will be in a key position to share expertise and assist other countries. Although some developing countries may not yet regard this as one of their priority areas, other observers fear that the accelerating use of computers and other NIT in the industrialized societies is strengthening their relative economic position and widening the information gap between industrialized and developing countries. While the introduction of computers in education cannot in itself reverse such trends, it may well be a pre-condition for the developing countries to stay in the race.

Towards a regional programme of co-operation in selected areas of education?

119. Unlike the other four Unesco regions, there is no European programme of co-operation in education comparable to the Major Project in the Field of Education in Latin America and the Caribbean or the Asia and Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID), with agreed common objectives around which certain regional activities could be designed for greater mutual impact and synergy. Apart from the activities undertaken through CEPES and CODIESEE, both of which have consultative bodies to help define priorities and ensure coherence, Unesco's action in the region seems to be characterized more by variety than by concentration. In addition, technical meetings in the region have frequently commented on the limited dissemination of the results of Unesco studies and meetings and the general lack of visibility of Unesco's activities. The Conference may wish to consider if certain of Unesco's activities might more effectively contribute to the further development of education in Europe through a regional programme of co-operation.

120. At least two alternatives could be considered. One approach would be to identify two of three priority areas or themes or projects (e.g. from among those mentioned in paragraph 19), based on a broad consensus, which would constitute the 'regional programme' and receive special attention for one or two biennia. Existing mechanisms such as CEPES, CODIESEE, or the Associated Schools, would contribute to the implementation of the programme in so far as possible. Unesco activities outside the scope of this regional programme would continue to be implemented as usual.

121. A second approach might be to regroup into a general or 'umbrella' programme selected activities foreseen in the regular programme and having a similar functional nature (e.g. all activities concerned with research and development) or catering to the same professional group or public (e.g. research institutions, teachers and other educators, young people, and the general public). Such a programme could be built upon the experience gained in the existing regional and subregional networks for educational innovation (e.g. APEID and CODIESEE). Other activities (in higher education or the Associated Schools Project, for example) could of course continue as before, but would not necessarily be part of this kind of regional programme.

122. Both alternatives could draw on the experience of the joint studies programme of the European National Commissions for Unesco, and particularly the recommendations of their meeting on 'co-operation in research and

development of education in Europe (Schloss Ottenstein, Austria, May 1987) which found 'it desirable to develop gradually a programme of co-operation in educational research and development ...' (Final Report). They could also draw on the experience of the Associated Schools Project in respect to organizing exchanges of personnel and 'twinning' arrangements.

123. A regional programme presumes some focal point for liaison and co-ordination. Unesco Headquarters could ensure this function which entails many tasks (organizing meetings, monitoring activities, disseminating results, issuing newsletters, answering inquiries, and so on). This solution would ensure access to a range of expertise, documentation and specialized services; it would also facilitate contacts with similar programmes and networks in other regions.

124. The establishment of a regional programme of either kind could be initiated within Unesco's current programme and budget. For future biennia, however, Member States could be invited to participate actively and to support the programme, or selected activities, through extra-budgetary contributions in the form of funds, co-financing or services, such as hosting meetings, providing consultants and sharing research results.

125. If the conference feels that a regional programme for co-operation in education would enhance the effectiveness of Unesco's action in Europe, it could consider whether such a programme should concentrate on certain areas or themes, or focus on activities of a particular nature, such as educational research, or involving particular professional groups or institutions.

126. In summary, the Conference is invited to consider how international and regional co-operation in education could be further strengthened and adapted to meet agreed priority needs, and in this connection to:

identify priority areas for regional co-operation in the field of education, bearing in mind its discussions on items 7(a) and 7(b) of the provisional agenda, as well as the ongoing areas of co-operation included in Unesco's current Approved Programme and Budget;

consider whether the existing mechanisms for consultation are adequate to guide, develop, harmonize and evaluate regional co-operative activities;

advise on the forms and modalities of regional and subregional co-operation in education which are most effective and appropriate for the Member States of the Europe region, and advise on whether or not the existing mechanisms for programme implementation need to be reinforced or supplemented;

reflect on the advisability of a possible regional programme to meet more effectively the particular concerns of the States in the region, to optimize the use of available resources, and to give more coherence and visibility to Unesco's action;

consider possible measures to reinforce the harmonization and co-ordination of relevant education activities conducted by intergovernmental bodies and non-governmental organizations active in the Europe region and indicate which areas seem most suitable for possible joint action;

identify new ways and means of intensifying co-operation in the field of education between States of the Europe region and the countries of other regions, including possible common approaches and joint action within the framework of certain global Unesco programmes which benefit particularly the developing countries.